

“Inner Traffic and Spacious Mind”
A Dhamma and Science Forum

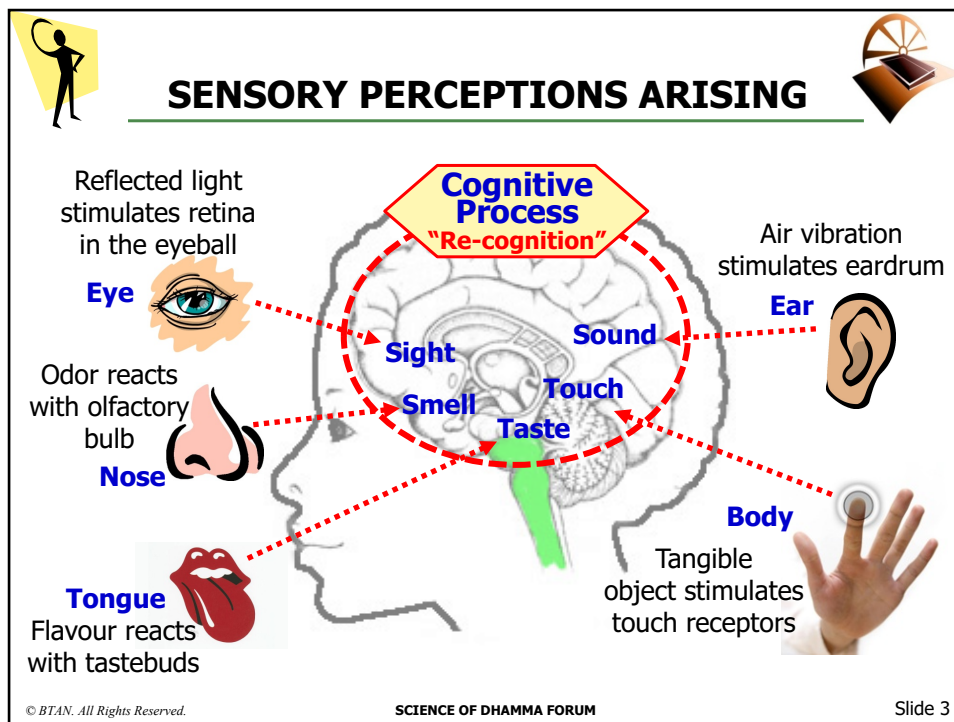
Acharya Upul Gamage

Bro. Billy Tan


BUDDHIST GEM FELLOWSHIP
Growing People, Inspiring the Future
w : www.bgf.org.my f : Buddhist Gem Fellowship

The poster features a vibrant landscape with a large green tree in the center, rolling green hills, and a blue sky with white clouds. Two circular portraits of the speakers are overlaid on the left side. A red banner at the bottom right contains the Buddhist Gem Fellowship logo and contact information.






-
- OUR MIND'S FILTER**
1. Our 5 sense organs continuously sense and transmit to the **brain** enormous amounts of sensory information of stimulations from our environment;
 2. Our **conscious mind** (cognitive process) is not capable of processing every single stimulus that the **brain** receives from the sense organs;
 3. Our conscious mind can only pay attention to 3 or 4 tasks "simultaneously", but can only truly focus on one single task at any moment in time;
- © BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 4



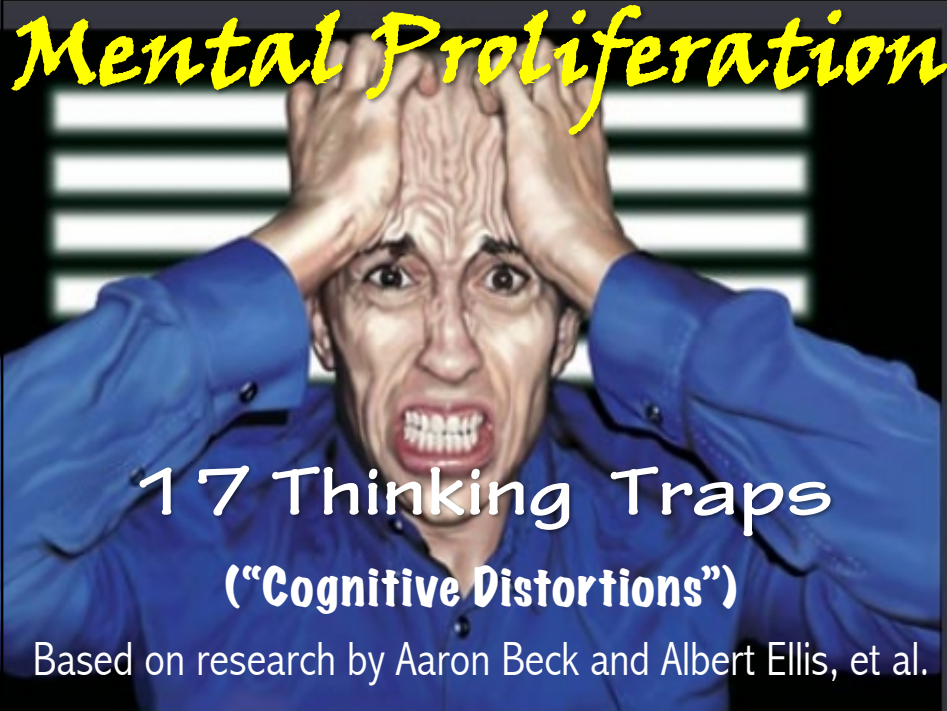
OUR MIND'S FILTER



4. Our conscious mind copes with this by applying **filters** TRYING to “simplify”, or to make sense (“*rationalize*”) of the world around us by:

- ① **Generalization** – categorizing or grouping similar experiences as the “same” experience;
- ② **Deletion** – ignoring or leaving out details or a portion of the experience;
- ③ **Distortion** – inaccurately representing the experience in a simplified or compromised (limiting) manner.


© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 5




Mental Proliferation

17 Thinking Traps (“Cognitive Distortions”)

Based on research by Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis, et al.




COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #1 - #6




Category	Description
1) Mind Reading	Imagining what others are thinking about you or your circumstances without clarifying
2) Fortune Telling	Predicting the future adversely
3) Labeling/Generalization	Making sweeping assumptions or statements without supporting evidence
4) Discounting Positives	Minimizing or ignoring all positive aspects, leaving inadequacy and hopelessness
5) Negative Filtering	Focusing and amplifying only negative aspects excluding any positive opportunities
6) Black or White / Dichotomous Thinking	Extremist view of all or nothing, no grey areas or compromise, "always" or "never"

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.
SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM
Slide 7




COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #7 - #12




Category	Description
7) Perfectionist/"Should"	Expecting things to be ideal or perfect
8) Righteousness	Prioritizing truth, ethics and moral standards over human considerations
9) Magnification / Catastrophizing	Over-emphasis on specific details, blown out of proportion, worrying too much
10) Minimization	Overlooking / shrinking important issues or necessary considerations
11) Unfair Comparison	Negatively comparing with others successes
12) What If?	Over-intellectualizing or over-extended imagination of snowball effects

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.
SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM
Slide 8



COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #13 - #17




Category	Description
13) Blame Game / Finger Pointing	Finding faults in others or blaming others
14) Shame / Guilt / Personalizing	Finding faults in oneself or blaming oneself
15) Emotional Reasoning	Letting feelings alone guide your viewpoint or conclusions
16) Believing is seeing	Rejecting evidence that contradicts your beliefs, superstitions, or expectations
17) Past Orientation	Letting past experiences dictate all decision making about the future ("living in the past")

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 9

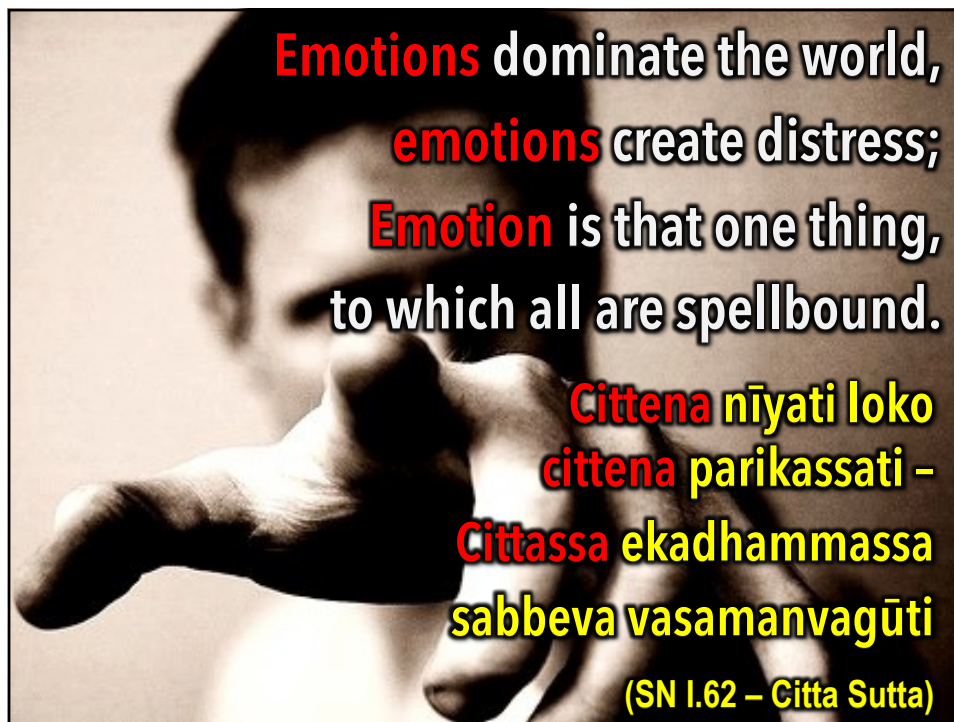
Manopubbangamā dhammā ~
manosetthā manomayā . . .


(Dhammapada verse #1)




Intellect

**Cognition precedes all experiences –
It predominates and creates all realities...**



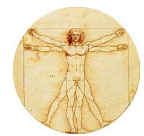


MENTAL EXPERIENCE



THREE PARTS OF MENTAL EXPERIENCE:

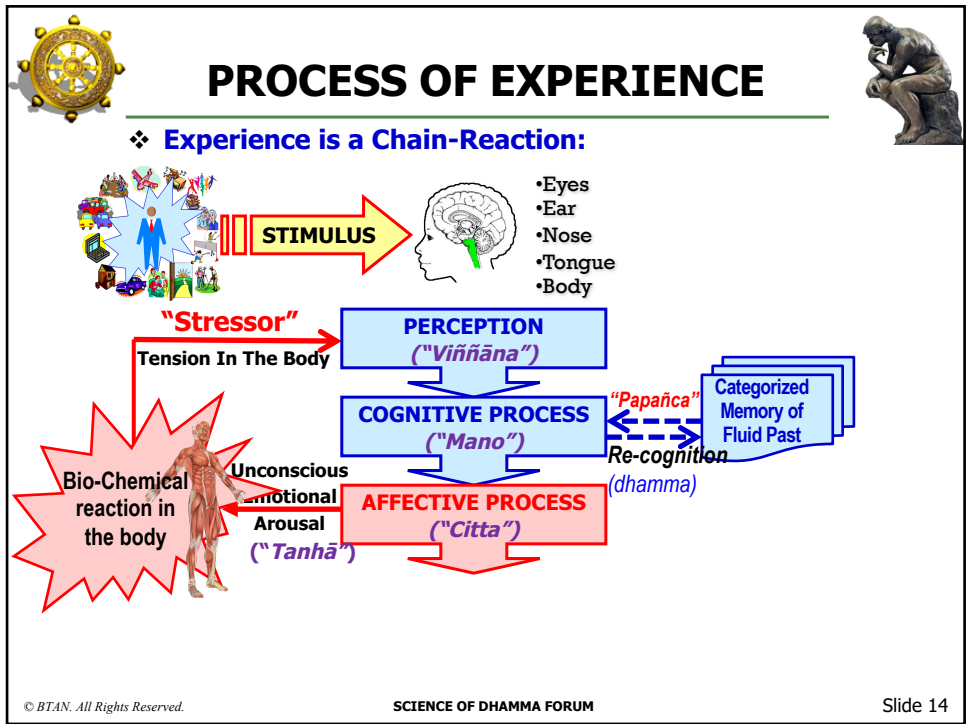
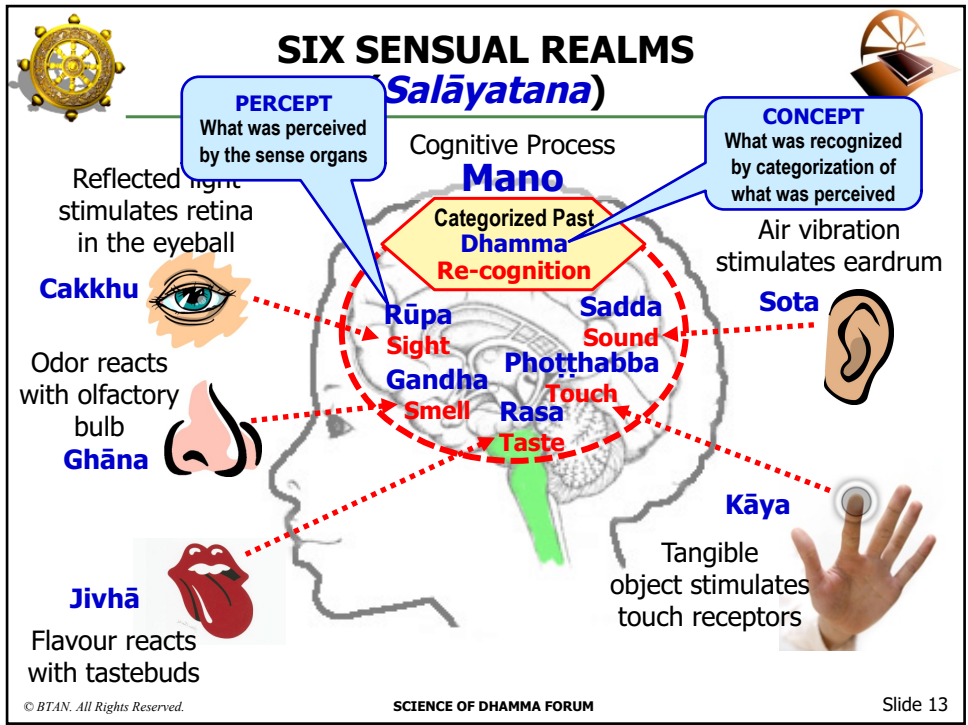
- **Viññāna** : Process of Perception ("perception")
 - what is perceive through the sense organs;
- **Mano** : Cognitive Process ("conception & intellect")
 - categorized interpretation of perception giving meaning to what was perceived;
- **Citta** : Affective Process ("emotion")
 - pleasant & unpleasant feelings arouse the emotions, leading to emotional excitement and reactions;
 - personalizing the experience with the notion there is a "self" to be affected.




© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.

SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM

Slide 12






THE NATURE OF EMOTION

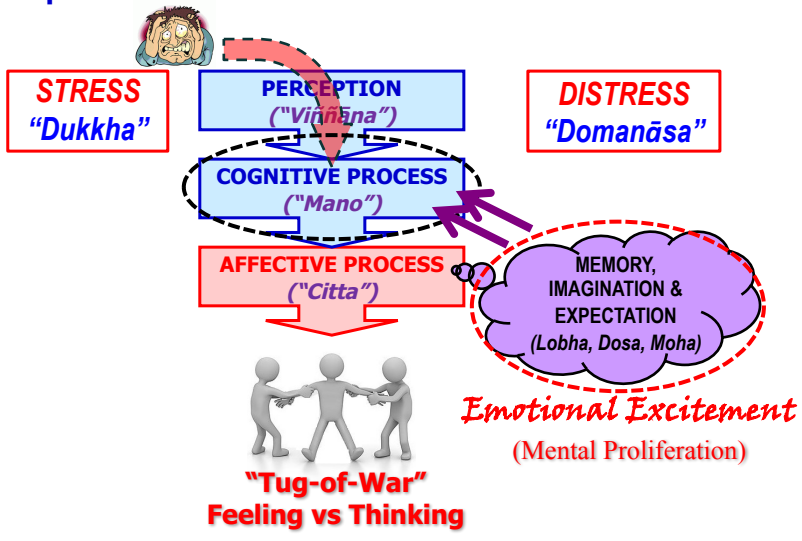
- EMOTION has 2 dimensions:
 - physiological (“fever”)
 - Hormones released
 - Body changes
 - Discomfort and unease
 - **STRESS (Dukkha)**
 - psychological (“vexation”)
 - Memory, Imagination, Expectation arise
 - Mental Proliferation (“cognitive distortions”)
 - **DISTRESS (Domanāsa)**

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 15




PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE


❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:



© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 16




MN18 Madhupindika Sutta ("The Honeyball")




- **Yatonidānaṃ, bhikkhu, purisaṃ papañca-saññāsaṅkhā samudācaranti**
- "In whatever way a person recognizes something by categorizing or labelling it, it is in this way that past experiences begin to affect behaviour unconsciously."

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 17





Anusayānaṃ Unconscious Processes Arising




- It is in this way, these unconscious mental processes arise ("*underlying tendencies*") and influence behaviour, leading to disagreements and conflicts:
 1. **rāgānusayānaṃ** – desires & greed arising unconsciously
 2. **paṭighānusayānaṃ** - anger & hatred arising unconsciously
 3. **diṭṭhānusayānaṃ** - opinions & beliefs arising unconsciously
 4. **vicikicchānusayānaṃ** - cognitive dissonance arising unconsciously
 5. **mānānusayānaṃ** - conceit arising unconsciously
 6. **bhavarāgānusayānaṃ** - clinging to existence and stability
 7. **avijjānusayānaṃ** - non-knowing ("ignorance") arising unconsciously

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 18

 **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE** 
(*"Vicikicchā"*)

- ❖ When "FEELING" and "REASONING" pull in opposite directions and one experiences **cognitive dissonance** (*"vicikicchā"*);
- ❖ One invariably reacts according to FEELING, and then "justify" one's **emotionally charged decisions** with clever "reasoning".

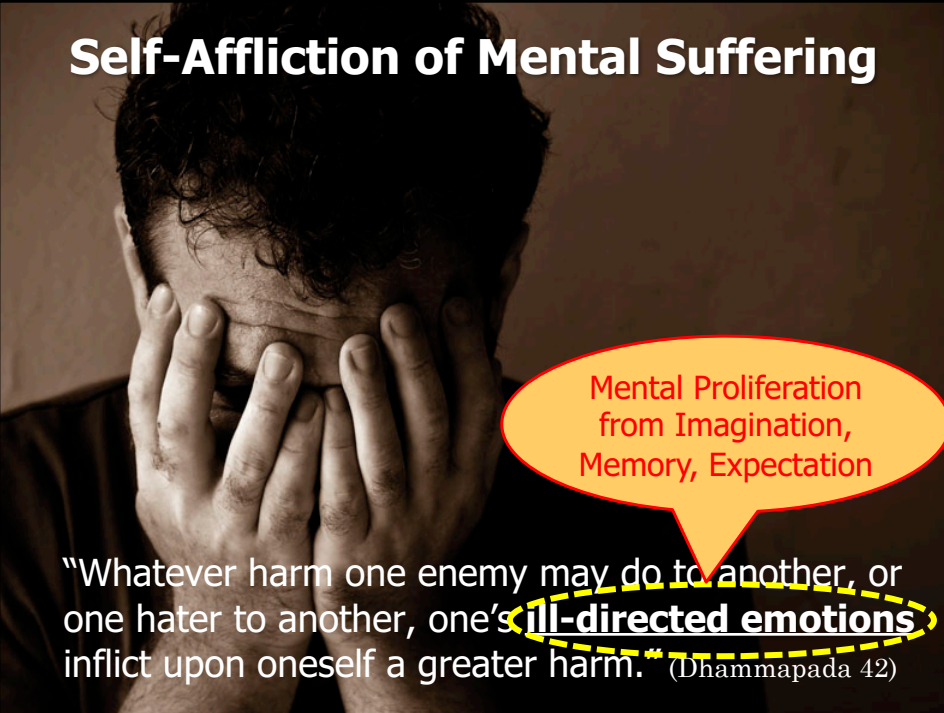


"FEELING"
Affective Process
(EMOTIONS)
(*"citta"*)

"REASONING"
Cognitive Process
(INTELLECT)
(*"mano"*)

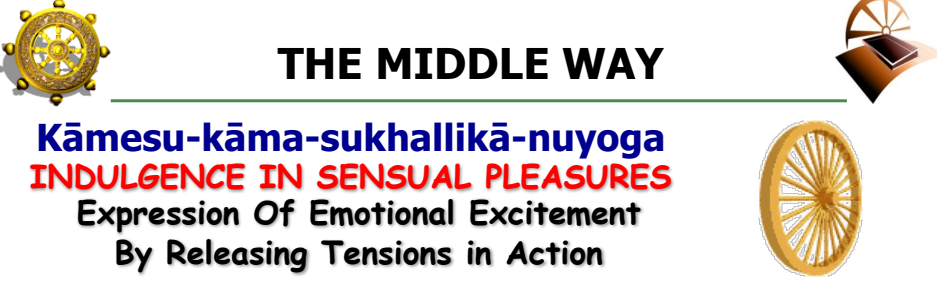
© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 19

Self-Affliction of Mental Suffering



Mental Proliferation from Imagination, Memory, Expectation

"Whatever harm one enemy may do to another, or one hater to another, one's **ill-directed emotions** inflict upon oneself a greater harm." (Dhammapada 42)



THE MIDDLE WAY

Kāmesu-kāma-sukhallikā-nuyoga
INDULGENCE IN SENSUAL PLEASURES
Expression Of Emotional Excitement
By Releasing Tensions in Action

THE MIDDLE WAY

Conscious Relaxation,
Introspective Attention,
Mental Equilibrium.
SUBLIME EIGHTFOLD WAY

Atta-kilamathā-nuyoga
SELF-TORMENT & SELF-MORTIFICATION
Suppression Of Emotional Urges
By With-holding all Tensions

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 21



3-STEP SELF-COMPASSION

 ❖ **PAUSE**
(allow time for emotional excitement & anxiety to calm down and hormonal reactions to subside)

 ❖ **RELAX**
(take deep breaths, relax the body, and consciously compose the mind to respond)

 ❖ **T.H.I.N.K.**
(purposefully focus on wholesome & beneficial response to the problem)

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved. SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM Slide 22



BENEFITS OF BREATHING



Most critically overlooked relaxation tool!

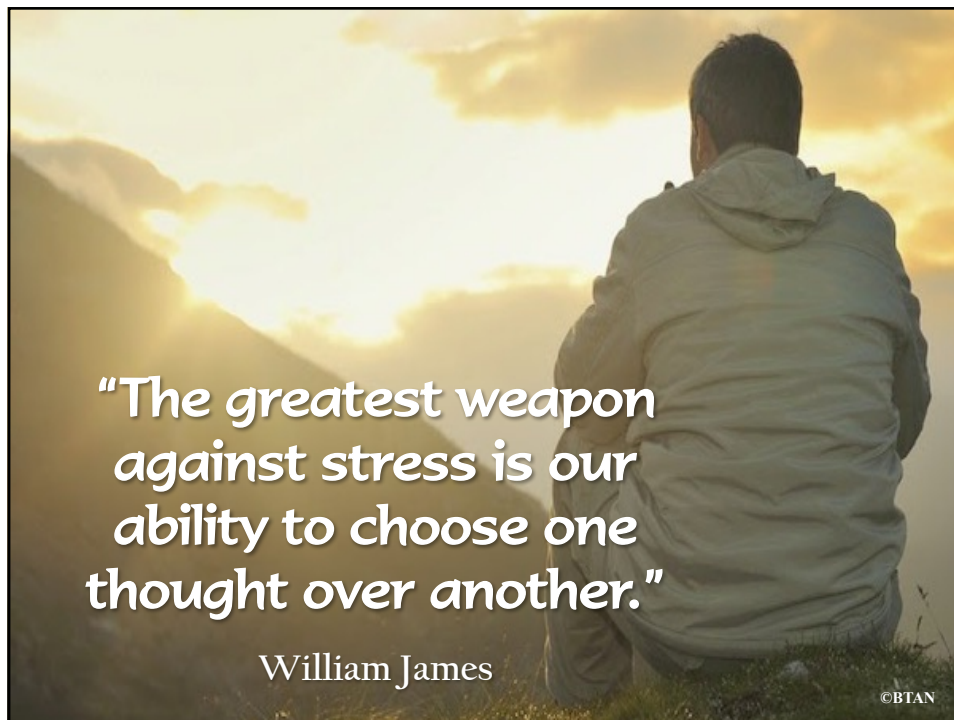
The fastest way to relax the body & calm the mind.

- a) Increases natural unforced oxygen intake (food for cells!);
- b) Stabilizes heart rate and blood pressure;
- c) Regulates body temperature and blood circulation;
- d) Restores and maintains homeostasis (stability);
- e) Calms the Amygdala, fear control center in the brain, by indicating the absence of threats.

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.

SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM


Slide 23




**“The greatest weapon
against stress is our
ability to choose one
thought over another.”**

William James

©BTAN




Our Response Is Our Choice In Life



- **RESPONSIBILITY = Response Ability,
Our Ability To Respond.**

“ Between stimulus and response there is a space.
In that space lies the freedom and our power
to choose our response. In those choices
lie our growth and our happiness. ”



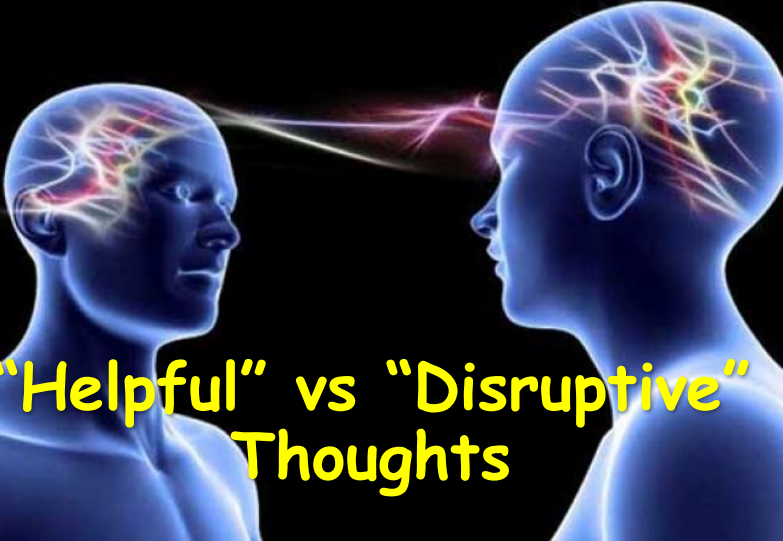
Viktor Frankl

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.

SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM

Slide 25

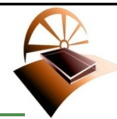
Discern Your Thoughts:



“Helpful” vs “Disruptive”
Thoughts



DISCERN YOUR THOUGHTS



Discern & Differentiate your thoughts.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS:

- I. Wholesome** – free of evil or malicious intent;
- II. Blameless** – when manifested does not cause strife or suffering to others;
- III. Resourceful** – when developed and undertaken leads to wellness, peace, and happiness to self and others;
- IV. Exemplary – praised and practiced by the wise** – people whose lives are clearly wholesome, blameless, and resourceful.

– Adapted from the Kalama Sutta AN.3.65

© BTAN. All Rights Reserved.

SCIENCE OF DHAMMA FORUM

Slide 27



For enquiries, updates, mailing list:
billy.tan@hotmail.com